

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUCAR 03582 171447Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 BIB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /033 W
-----180138Z 040479 /15

R 171403Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3304
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION BERLIN UNN
AMCONSUL MUNICH

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, UR, RO
SUBJECT: POLITICIZED GYMNASTICS OR HOW SPORT DOES NOT
ALWAYS PROMOTE FRIENDSHIP

1. SUMMARY. SUBJECT CURRENTLY RECEIVING MOST EXTENSIVE
COVERAGE IN ROMANIAN PRESS, AS WELL AS NUMBER ONE TOPIC
OF CONVERSATION IN BUCHAREST, IS MAY 14 WITHDRAWAL OF
ROMANIAN WOMENS' GYMNASTIC TEAM FROM EUROPEAN
CHAMPIONSHIPS IN PRAGUE. ROMANIAN MEDIA HAS SHARPLY
ATTACKED "BIASED AND UNSPORTSMANLIKE SCORING" OF EASTERN
EUROPEAN JUDGES, ESPECIALLY SOVIETS, WHICH, INTER ALIA,
RESULTED IN REVERSAL OF NADIA COMANECI'S APPARENT VICTORY
IN VAULT AND SUBSEQUENT AWARD OF GOLD MEDAL IN THAT
EVENT TO SOVIET GYMNAST NELLIE KIM. IN THIS INSTANCE
AT LEAST, SPORT HAS NOT EXACTLY PROMOTED CONCEPT OF
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ROMANIAN-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP. END SUMMARY.

2. ELEVENTH WOMANS' GYMNASTIC EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
WAS HELD IN PRAGUE NOVEMBER 13-14 AND TERMINATED WITH
WALK-OUT BY ROMANIAN TEAM AND ITS OLYMPIC CHAMPION
NADIA COMANECI AND FELLOW TEAMMATE TEODORA UNGUREANU.
ACCORDING TO SPOKESMAN FOR ROMANIAN SPORTS FEDERATION

IT OBVIOUS IN FIRST DAY THAT ROMANIAN TEAM WAS BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IN BOTH PLACEMENT AND SCORING. LOW SCORES ACCORDING UNGUREANU BY SOVIET, CZECH AND EAST GERMAN JUDGES DENIED HER EXPECTED MEDAL IN FIRST DAY'S INDIVIDUAL COMPETITION WHICH, IN SPITE OF ALL, WAS AGAIN WON BY NADIA COMANECI. HOWEVER, FROM ROMANIAN POINT OF VIEW, MOST GREVIOUS INCIDENT TOOK PLACE ON SECOND DAY OF COMPETITION WHEN, DUE TO TWO SOVIET PROTESTS, UPHELD BY SOVIET HEAD OF APPEALS JURY, SOVIET GYMNAST NELLIE KIM WAS MOVED FROM SECOND PLACE INTO A TIE WITH COMANECI AND, FOLLOWING A 20 MINUTE DELAY, SUBSEQUENTLY DECLARED THE VICTOR IN THE VAULT COMPETITION.

3. AT THAT POINT ROMANIAN TEAM WALKED OUT OF EVENT AND RETURNED HOME TO ESTIMATED CROWD OF SOME 10,000 AT AIRPORT, BEARING SIGNS PROCLAIMING "LONG LIVE HONOR, CORRECTNESS, TRUTH AND DIGNITY IN SPORT." SINCE THEN PRESS HAS RUN SERIES OF ARTICLES ON "HOW THE SPORT ETHIC WAS SEVERELY VIOLATED" OR "HOW OUR GYMNASTS WERE FRUSTRATED", AS WELL AS NUMEROUS EXCERPTS OF FOREIGN PRESS COMMENTARY IN SAME TONE. SOVIET HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF GYMNASTS DID NOT HELP MATTERS WHEN HE STATED THAT ROMANIANS SIMPLY COULDN'T STAND THAT NADIA WAS NOT THE BEST AND SO LEFT.

4. COMMENT: WHILE CYNICS MIGHT SAY THAT ROMANIANS IN THIS INSTANCE SHOULD HAVE BEEN PREPARED TO TAKE AS MUCH AS THEY THEMSELVES RECENTLY GAVE, I.E. IN THE KODES-NASTASTE DAVIS CUP MATCH HERE TWO WEEKS AGO THERE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WERE MORE THAN A FEW QUESTIONABLE LINE CALLS, NO ONE WILL CONVINCE ROMANIAN PUBLIC THAT IT HAS NOT ONCE AGAIN BEEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BY ITS RUSSIAN NEIGHBOR. IT WAS AN EVENT WHICH DID LITTLE TO PROMOTE SOVIET-ROMANIAN FRIENDSHIP THROUGH SPORTS. BARNES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AMITY, WOMEN, DISCRIMINATION, SPHERE OF INFLUENCE, NEWS MEDIA COMMENTS, ATHLETIC PRESENTATIONS, HONOR AWARDS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 17-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BUCHAR03582
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770175-1047
Format: TEL
From: BUCHAREST
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770550/aaaabrdq.tel
Line Count: 103
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d936be92-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
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TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, UR, RO
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